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SUBJECT: CSTO Castigates NATO And Its Neighbors

¶1. Summary: The Russian Secretary General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) on June 20 gave a press conference in which he ridiculed NATO and opined that its military installations in Eastern European countries were part of a military agenda in Russia's backyard. He stated CSTO sees no reason to cooperate with NATO. The Secretary mentioned the CSTO's cooperation with UN and other international organizations to combat narcotics and terrorism and spoke of intra-organizational support for law-enforcement training and weapons sales. The Secretary concluded by stating that he would be willing to conduct negotiations between GOB officials and opposition leaders should the situation in Belarus become destabilized. End Summary.

Attacking NATO

¶2. At a June 20 press conference in Minsk, Secretary General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) Nikolai Bordyuzha told reporters the creation of military infrastructure in NATO-member countries surrounding Russia and Belarus worried the CSTO. Bordyuzha claimed the creation of reconnaissance centers, radar stations, and plans for missile defense systems in Eastern Europe were not to be used to counter Iranian and North Korean rockets, as NATO has said. Bordyuzha told reporters he was familiar with the missile defense industry and considered NATO's reason for the military bases in these countries as "funny."

¶3. According to Bordyuzha, the CSTO was worried about NATO member countries that failed to meet basic NATO standards, using Romania and Bulgaria as examples. He concluded that NATO's enlargement policy was purely political, served its "specific" military agenda and predicted Ukraine would be NATO's next target. Bordyuzha claimed the CSTO did not force relations with other nations because such actions would impede the CSTO's development and evolution. No countries have submitted for CSTO membership.

¶4. Bordyuzha explained that the CSTO was a self-sufficient organization that saw no need to cooperate with NATO. Instead, its main priority was to develop stronger relations with the UN, especially in combating terrorism and narcotics, and maintain its established cooperation with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the OSCE and the Council of the Baltic States.

Agreements

¶5. According to independent online news source Belapan, members of the CSTO on June 20 signed agreements on emergency military assistance, training of law-enforcement personnel, and material supplies for law-enforcement agencies. According to Bordyuzha, in accordance with past agreements, Russia sells arms to CSTO member countries at domestic prices, but the topic was a sensitive one and, therefore, was not widely publicized. Bordyuzha added that should a political crisis break out in Belarus, he would be ready to mediate between GOB officials and opposition leaders. He said the CSTO's task was to prevent destabilization, mass riots, and other situations that would put Belarus in a "terrible scenario."

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